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FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
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INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000142

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/19/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: PRT ANBAR: PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS MOVE AGAINST  
"AWAKENING COUNCIL" POLICE CHIEF

Classified By: PRT Anbar Team Leader James Soriano for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Anbar reporting cable.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary: Several key members of the Anbar Provincial Council (PC) have moved to end the tenure of interim Provincial Chief of Police (PCOP) Tariq Yousif within a month, signaling the latest round in the struggle for the highly-contested Anbar top cop position between the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP)-dominated PC and the Iraq Awakening Movement, or Sahawa al Iraq (SAI). Tariq is described as a professional law enforcement officer, but his association with SAI puts him at odds with the IIP. Some members accused Tariq of not doing enough to stop terrorist infiltration of the police force, drug use among police and allowing for corruption. None of the accusations were substantiated. After the meeting, Tariq told us he still wanted to continue in his position but that the PC plans to choose a new PCOP from a list of three other candidates. The struggle between IIP and SAI over the PCOP slot shows that security is still a core Anbari concern. End Summary.

POLITICAL BATTLE FOR THE ANBAR POLICE CHIEF  
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[1](#)3. (U) At a November 14 Provincial Council (PC) meeting in Ramadi, several PC members moved unofficially to terminate the tenure of interim Provincial Chief of Police (PCOP) Major General Tariq Yousif within a month, signaling the latest round in the struggle for the highly-contested Anbar top cop position between the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), which controls the PC, and Sheikh Ahmad Abu Risha's &Iraq Awakening Movement,<sup>8</sup> (SAI), which has sought to wrest more power on provincial administration for itself.

[1](#)4. (U) The SAI-backed Tariq was named interim PCOP in October 2007, when SAI managed to oust the previous IIP-backed police chief but was unable to garner enough support to give Tariq the job outright. At the time, the PC voted to approve Tariq on an interim basis.

[1](#)5. (C) Tariq is described by his supporters as a professional law enforcement officer who fought to rid Ramadi of terrorists. He previously served as SAI's chief of security and held the title of Deputy Minister of Interior for Police Affairs in Anbar and Salahadin provinces. But his association with SAI puts him at odds with the IIP. &Very few of us support giving this position permanently to Tariq,<sup>8</sup> PC Chair Abdulsalam Abdullah has told us.

ACCUSATIONS  
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[1](#)6. (U) The move to limit Tariq's term did not come to a vote, but several PC members, including PC Chairman Abdulsalam indicated that this was their intention at the January 14 meeting.

¶7. (U) Some members accused Tariq ) who was summoned to attend ) of not doing enough to stop alleged drug use and terrorist infiltration of the police force, and for winking at corruption. Accusers also complained that Anbar's police had become too divided among tribal lines, with some police stations and districts controlled almost exclusively by certain tribes. Tariq responded that he is working to make the police force less reliant on tribal loyalties.

¶8. (U) None of the accusations were substantiated, and even PC Chair Abdulsalam came to Tariq's defense, saying the accusations were too vague. Nevertheless, Abdulsalam and several of Tariq's accusers agreed that his interim tenure should end in a month, at which time the PC would decide who they believe should replace him from a list of three other candidates.

#### OTHER NOMINEES

¶9. (C) After the meeting, Tariq told us he still wanted to continue as PCOP, and that he thought he had enough support within SAI and among other PC members to stay on. He called the accusations politically motivated. Tariq said he suspected his tenure will be high on the agenda for the next PC meeting, scheduled for January 29. According to SAI, their movement has nine members on the 49-member body. Most the rest are IIP.

¶10. (C) The PC plans to choose a new PCOP among a list of three other candidates, including Major General Riyadh Abbas Latif al-Jabburi, an IIP candidate, and Brigadier General Hatim Abd al-Karim al-Muajill, an SAI candidate. Tariq is

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not among those officially nominated, as PC Chair Abdulsalam effectively blocked his name from consideration during the October PC meeting during which the IIP-backed police chief was fired. There is some question as to whether SAI will back Tariq as permanent PCOP, or whether it will support Hatim. Nevertheless, Tariq claims he has Ministry of Interior (MOI) backing and enough support within SAI to stay on.

¶11. (U) The PCOP selection process requires the PC to forward a list of three nominees to the MOI, expressing a preference for one of the candidates. The MOI then approves either the preferred candidate or names one of the other two ) or an entirely new candidate of the MOI's choosing. Any candidate approved by the MOI which is not on the PC list of nominees must be ratified by a PC vote. This requirement would mean Tariq would need the backing of the MOI as well as a majority on the IIP-dominated PC.

#### COMMENT

¶12. (C) The political struggle between IIP and SAI for control over the PCOP slot shows that security is still at the core of Anbari concerns. SAI built its reputation on bringing security to key areas of Anbar Province, and still sees the PCOP position as a key goal in their struggle to gain more political influence in the province. However, PC Chair Abdulsalam and other IIP members are concerned that SAI control over the PCOP position will lead to further tribalization of the police force, and will dilute IIP influence in the province.

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